UNITED NATIONS
ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL

Distr.: LIMITED
E/ECA/PAMM/HRP/85/WP.3
May 1985
Original : ENGLISH

ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR AFRICA

National Manpower and Employment
Planning Staff Development Workshop

Monrovia, Liberia, 12-30 August 1985

LC/NAIROBI.

PREPARATION OF NATIONAL MANPOWER REPORTS

(An outline)

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I. Introduction

Difference between a national manpower report and a national manpower plan:

(a) A manpower plan outlines goals and/or objectives, and programmes required to reach the goal. It is a plan of action which outlines steps which will be taken to meet manpower requirements and overcome problems of manpower allocation and utilization in order to achieve national goals.

(b) A manpower report is a status report which indicates the current manpower picture in the nation; the progress achieved as of a certain date in implementing the manpower plan; problems encountered in implementation of the plan; suggestions (if possible) as to methods which might be employed to overcome problems and ideally draws attention to emerging manpower problems not covered by the manpower plan.

II. Frequency and Timing of Manpower Reports

A. Frequency

1. There is no one single answer to this question. Depends on:
   (a) Frequency with which revised manpower data are produced;
   (b) Resources (money and staff) which can be devoted to the preparation of the report;
   (c) Interest of government and non-government officials;
   (d) Need for a current assessment.

2. In most underdeveloped nations, it is not feasible to prepare a comprehensive annual manpower report.
   (a) Not feasible due to infrequency of revised data and lack of money and staff;
   (b) Probably the best that can be hoped for is a comprehensive report every 3 to 5 years with a short supplemental report annually (concentrating on problems in implementing the manpower plan and newly emerging problems - with no statistical appendix.)

B. Timing of the manpower report

1. Suggest the report be issued about the middle of the period covered by the plan and near the end of the period;
2. Preparation of report at the end of the period covered by the manpower plan can be co-ordinated with data preparation for the new manpower plan.

III. Organizational and Administrative Problems

A. Problems of co-operation and co-ordination between government and other agencies in the preparation of a manpower report.

1. Some aspects of the operation of almost every agency will be reported on directly or indirectly in the manpower report (education, health, agriculture, industrial and/or economic development, etc.);

2. Many of the agencies involved will have to furnish the results of statistical studies and/or operational information. In some cases it might be necessary to have them prepare parts of the report.

B. Responsibility for the preparation of the manpower report.

1. Again, there is no one answer. Will, in fact, often be determined by existing organizational structure of the manpower planning machinery and the level of interest;

2. Ideally, would be prepared by a team of staff directly responsible to the highest political authority.

   (a) Usually not practical, everyone wants his area of interest to be given special status and attention by the highest political authority.

   (b) Could also result in duplication of staff of the agency responsible for manpower planning, statistics, etc.

   (c) One solution has been to have an agency normally responsible for manpower planning actually prepare the report but issue it in the name of the highest policy making body.

      (i) Example - U.S. Manpower Report of the President is actually prepared by the Ministry of Labour.

      (ii) This procedure allows the President to use the report as a vehicle to promote proposed manpower programmes if he desires. He also has the option to have it released directly by the agency preparing it if he does not wish to actively promote new policies and/or programmes but still wants a status report and evaluation.

      (iii) One problem with this procedure is that it may make it very difficult to criticize programme officially supported by the Chief of State. Realistically, however, this is difficult in any case.

3. Another approach is to have the report released by a high-level inter-agency manpower policy committee with recommended policy and may be responsible for the preparation of manpower plans as well as manpower reports.

   (a) In theory, this is an attractive approach if the committee members are at the policy making level.

      (i) Facilitates co-operation, communication and co-ordination between all ministries with an input to the manpower report.

      (ii) Makes available to the committee all the expertise within the various ministries as staff support.

   (b) In practice, it also presents problems:

      (i) Some ministers may have very limited interest and be unwilling to give either their own time or the time of their staff to the committee. Result may be infrequent meetings, limited staff support, and delays in the decision-making process.

      (ii) Advantages of co-operation and co-ordination may be lost as a result of bureaucratic bickering and the suspicion of some ministers that others are trying to take over functions of their ministries.

4. A third method is to simply assign responsibility for the preparation of the report to a single ministry and rely on them to receive necessary co-operation from other agencies.

   (a) This is the most common method. Responsibility for preparation of the report is often assigned to the Ministry of Economic Development, Ministry of Planning, Ministry of Education or Ministry of Labour.

      (i) First two are the most common. In fact, will often provide most staff work even if one of the other methods of assigning responsibility is used.

   (b) In some countries, the manpower report may only be one section of a more general report on economic development or educational training. If a country has only limited manpower programmes this may be practical but it will tend to severely limit the scope of the manpower report itself.

   (c) Major disadvantage of this approach is difficulty of securing co-operation of other agencies:

      (i) Can help resolve by associating report directly with the Chief of State.

      (ii) May also restrict input of other agencies to furnishing data and feeder reports (agency responsible for preparation of report writes all the chapters themselves but uses extracts from internal or published reports of other agencies and statistics compiled by these agencies). This reduces reliance on other agencies.

   (d) Advantage is that responsibility is clearly assigned to one agency.

IV. Contents and Organization of a Manpower Report

A. Contents and organization will, of course, vary between countries reflecting differences in:

1. The goals, objectives and priorities of different countries;
2. The nature and scope of specific development and manpower programmes;
3. The organization of the government structure;
4. The availability and quality of staff and other resources;
5. The availability of manpower data;
6. The active interest and support received from high government officials.

B. General type of information desirable in a manpower report.

1. A general statement explaining the government's manpower policy, its goals and/or objectives and the rationale for establishing the present policy.

   (a) Should explain the role manpower policy plays in development.
   (b) May give some broad historical prospective concerning manpower policy development.
   (c) May explain reasons for recent or proposed changes in goals, objectives, or programmes.

2. Current manpower status and historical trends (with analysis by geographic area, nationality, industrial sector, occupational categories or other groupings where appropriate and possible). This section is devoted (to the extent possible) to an analysis of current and past statistical data and other relevant information on the following subjects:

   (a) population, labour force, employment, unemployment and underemployment (with appropriate analysis by industrial sector, occupation, nationality groups, etc.);
   (b) productivity;
   (c) immigration and emigration (may be combined with analysis of expatriate employment in 2a);
   (d) work stoppages, occupational health and safety etc. (as appropriate);
   (e) education and educational personnel;
   (f) skill training (institutionalized and non-institutionalized);
   (g) income and wages.

3. Discussion and evaluation of each of the major manpower programmes (may include brief description of each programme, implicit or explicit evaluation of success in achieving objectives; inter-relationships with other programmes, problems encountered; and possible solutions).

   (a) manpower development programmes (education, training, upgrading);
   (b) utilization and allocation programmes (such as employment service, relocation projects, income and wage programmes);

4. Discussion of programmes which are not in and of themselves manpower programmes but have serious implications on manpower requirements, supply, utilization, or allocation (show inter-relationships).

5. Revised estimates of projected requirements and supply with emphasis on highly skilled occupations (discuss imbalances, analyse reasons for imbalances, and suggest solutions in general terms, to either change future supply or requirements.

6. General discussion of unresolved manpower problems, and newly emerging manpower problems which may require future action.

7. Detailed statistical appendix if feasible.

C. Organization of manpwer report

- No one "right" organization. Choose most practical for your circumstances.

V. <u>Actions which can be taken to increase effectiveness and maximize use of the report</u>

A. Audience for whom the report should be written in the "informed laymen". Technical language should be avoided to the extent possible. Writing should be simple, direct and concise. If possible, use simple charts instead of complex tables in the body of the report.

B. Report should be distributed to all political figures in the administration, all ministries, the education, economics and business departments of all colleges and universities, state and local government leaders, labour organizations, and important members of the business community, and other interested individuals.

C. Short summaries of major conclusions and recommendations can be prepared and published as a separate pamphlet or in an appropriate magazine (without statistics).

D. A press conference and/or press releases can be used to inform people of the availability of the report and to awaken interest.

E. Devise means of obtaining feedback from important users to discover the e extent to which it is being used; the purposes for which it is being used; and how it can be improved.